



**Governance and Audit  
Committee**

**26 September 2023**

**Subject: Member Development: Review of Original Induction; Revised Training Programme for the remainder of the Civic Year; and to Agree Training Principles**

Report by:	Director of Corporate Services and Monitoring Officer
Contact Officer:	Katie Storr Democratic Services and Elections Team Manager Katie.storr@west-lindsey.gov.uk
Purpose / Summary:	<p>This report provides an overview of the original Member Induction Programme, the need to the revise the approach, and a resulting revised induction programme in response to feedback received.</p> <p>The revised draft plan runs for the period October 2023 to April 2024 and the report seeks to establish some agree principles in organising training for Members.</p>

**RECOMMENDATION(S):**

**That Members:**

- (a) Note and support the content of the report and acknowledge the current position:**
- (b) Approve the proposals contained with the report which will formulate the Member Training Plan for the remainder of the Civic Year 23/24 and which are detailed in Section 3 of the report and summarised in Appendix 2;**
- (c) Support and acknowledge the Officer training plan which will run alongside the Revised Member Induction Plan, referenced in section 3.6;**

- (d) Approve the training principles, and revised delivery methods, detailed throughout the report and summarised in Appendix 2, to be introduced in recognition of the revised make-up of the Council following the all-out Election in May 2023 and feedback received to date; and**
- (e) Approve the next steps to be undertaken by the Member Development Group detailed in section 7 which will begin to inform the Year 2 Training Plan for approval by this Committee in April 2024.**

## IMPLICATIONS

### **Legal:**

WLDC'S Code of Conduct requires all Councillors to undertake Code of Conduct Training (including declarations of interest).

All Councillors serving or substituting on the Council's regulatory committees must undertake training – this is a mandatory requirement and is enforced robustly to safeguard the Council's decisions in these quasi judicial matters.

It is highly recommended, and considered best practice that Elected Members receive a comprehensive and robust induction to enable them to fulfil their duties as an Elected Member.

### **Financial: FIN/79/24**

The proposals within the report can be contained within the current Member Development Budget held by Democratic Services.

Officer training will be met from the Corporate Training Budget.

Members are eligible to claim travel expenses for in person training, there is a budget to fund such claims.

### **Staffing:**

Delivery of the Plan can be met with existing staffing resources and external trainers will be procured where required.

### **Equality and Diversity including Human Rights:**

Consideration has been given to different learning styles, as reflected throughout the body of the report.

Individual adaptations would be made to this programme where there was an individual need identified.

### **Data Protection Implications:**

There are no data protection implications arising from this report.

### **Climate Related Risks and Opportunities:**

Remote training has a positive impact on the Council's climate and sustainability aspirations.

In-person training can not be avoided but it is acknowledged that this does increase the Council's overall carbon footprint.

**Section 17 Crime and Disorder Considerations:**

No implications arising from the report

**Health Implications:**

No implications arising from the report

**Title and Location of any Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:**

G and Report – Approving Induction

<https://democracy.sharedlincs.net/documents/s33857/Member%20Development%20-%20Induction%20Plan%202023.pdf>

Feedback from Member Officer Away Day – July 2023 (notes held by Corporate Policy Team/ Democratic Services)

**Risk Assessment:**

Inadequately trained Members can lead to risks in the robustness and quality of the Local Authority’s decision-making process. There is an increased risk for quasi-judicial decisions.

Inadequately trained Members could lead to a rise in complaints and can impact on the public’s confidence in local democracy and in turn have a negative impact on the Authority’s reputation.

An inadequate understanding of core governance principles can lead to wider systemic issues.

**Call in and Urgency:**

**Is the decision one which Rule 14.7 of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules apply?**

i.e. is the report exempt from being called in due to urgency (in consultation with C&I chairman)

Yes

No

X

**Key Decision:**

A matter which affects two or more wards, or has significant financial implications

Yes

No

## **Executive Summary**

This report provides the background to the 2023 Induction Programme for Members, explains why it was suspended, identifies the changed profile of Councillors, and proposes an amended approach in order to complete the Induction Programme.

Throughout the report, there is an assumed commitment required from Councillors and Officers alike to ensure the amended programme is delivered as advertised, and that attendance by Councillors is maintained.

There are three themes detailed within the report, explaining a tiered approach, with the intention of meeting the brief given by Leading Members that the programme should be accessible and manageable. There are also new approaches detailed in terms of alternative delivery methods, such as video briefings and online options.

The Committee is being asked to approve the new approach, and training to be completed between October 2023 and April 2024, with approval required for any subsequent actions to take place.

## 1. Background and Introduction

1.1 The Authority has long recognised the importance and need for Elected Members to have a full and comprehensive training programme, recognising the particular importance of a robust induction. Induction and training programmes provide Members with the tools and skills to enable them to undertake their role to the fullest and also ensure the Authority's decision making is safe, legal and robust.

1.2 The role of a Councillor is varied and wide-reaching, with the need to be able to assist residents, businesses, and visitors, as well as acting as an ambassador for the district and the Council. It is a demanding but rewarding role, and it is essential that our Councillors are supported to fulfil that role to the best of their abilities, above and beyond what is required within the decision-making process.

1.3 Having delivered what was considered to be a successful Induction Programme in 2019, much direction was taken from that success in preparing the 2023 programme. The building blocks remained the same, with new features introduced in response to the feedback received from those involved in 2019 and throughout the four-year term.

1.4 The Governance and Audit Committee at the time agreed the Induction Programme at their meeting on 24 January 2023. The report can be viewed here:

<https://democracy.sharedlincs.net/documents/s33857/Member%20Development%20-%20Induction%20Plan%202023.pdf>

This information was shared in both candidate and nomination packs in the period running into the all-out Elections to ensure that those seeking election could understand the commitment required through the early months of Office, from the outset.

1.5 The programme commenced with a two-day Services Fayre, which all Members were required to attend in order to sign their Acceptance of Office, receive their IT equipment and complete the initial administrative tasks. There was widespread positive feedback for this element of the induction. The full Induction Programme then consisted of the following subject areas and were categorised as detailed below.

### (A) "Sessions considered 'training' areas, for new and returning Members"

- How the Council Makes Decisions
- Overview of Committees
- Your Role in the Local Community
- Enforcement and Anti-social Behaviour (ASB)
- Risks, Protections and Policies (IT)
- Data Protection, Freedom of Information and Information Governance
- Use of Chamber Equipment
- Introduction to Planning
- Member / Officer Relations and Communications
- Safeguarding

- Standing Orders / Rules of Debate
- Code of Conduct
- Declarable Interests
- Webcasting Etiquette
- Emergency Planning and Flooding

**(B) “Mandatory Sessions for Members of the associated Committee”**

- Full day – Planning – External Trainer
- Full day – Licensing and Regulatory – External Trainer
- Half day – work of the G&A Committee (including Risk AGS) and the Role of Auditors - facilitated by partners
- The Role of Overview and Scrutiny - External Trainer
- Focussed session of Standing Orders / Rules of Debate (P and P – Chairs Role) obligatory for Committee Chairs and Vice Chairs (to be arranged either as individual sessions or for multiple attendees, to be confirmed post Annual Council)

**(C) “A selection of information sessions, which were planned to be conducted as hybrid, with the recordings available for Members”**

- Corporate Plan & MTFP
- WLDC External Companies
- Central Lincolnshire Local Plan & Neighbourhood Plans
- Levelling Up Fund
- Environment & Sustainability Strategy
- UK Shared Prosperity Fund
- Progress & Delivery: WLDC Performance Management

## **2 Need for Revising the Induction Delivery**

- 2.1 The all-out Election resulted in over 50% of the Council membership changing. Whilst a degree of change is always to be anticipated, the Council also saw a change in its Administration. Furthermore, the profile of the Elected Members who now make up the new Council is arguably much altered, with there being an increase in those who are in full time employment; those with caring duties, and a change in the age profile.
- 2.2 Whilst a diverse Council is to be welcomed, this resulted in some challenges in delivering the Induction Programme in its original format, timescales and delivery methods. The need to deliver the subject areas which formed the approved Induction Programme remains and is an agreed principle with Elected Members. However, it is recognised the format and timescale in which the Programme is delivered need to be revisited.
- 2.3 With challenges evident in terms of attendance and availability, the original programme was revised by mid-May, and at that point was envisaged to run until 5 June, with duplicate sessions removed and all information sessions suspended. In the intervening period some training, primarily that of “information workshop” in nature, has naturally been

delivered, as business need has dictated and as Council business has progressed.

- 2.4 It is recognised that it can often be useful to revisit core training areas after those first few months in Office, as Members can then reference their personal experiences to gain greater understanding of each topic. As Members have now been in their roles for around five months, it is an opportune time to revisit those core subjects, as well as completing the Induction Programme.
- 2.5 As such this report sets out revised proposals to deliver the remainder of the Induction Programme (some by alternative methods); proposals to revisit some areas deemed 'core governance', using experience to date to make these matters "real"; and those areas Members or Officers have identified where "training" would be advantageous, having now been in their roles for a period of time. This is shown in Appendix 1 as at August 2023 - including indication of whether delivered to date.
- 2.6 In preparing the revised proposal, consideration has been given to the feedback provided by Leading Members through their Member/Officer Away Day in a bid to overcome any barriers which may exist. This included a directive to identify areas that are truly information giving and could therefore be available to Members to access at their convenience. At the same time, it must be recognised that some subject areas are critical to good governance and will require a more formal approach to attendance.
- 2.7 Officers were also asked to consider greater opportunity for self-learning, further development of e-learning modules and were also requested to re-consider the intensity of the Induction Programme, with sessions to be delivered over a longer period of time, in order to facilitate attendance and recognise the commitments on Members' diaries.

### **3. Revised Proposals**

- 3.1 The following revised proposal is split into themes, priorities, and proposed delivery methods, based on the nature of the subject to which the training relates, and takes Members through to the conclusion of the civic year 2023/24. A summary table of this revised proposal is expressed as a simple table at Appendix 2.
- 3.2 **Training Topics to be converted to video briefings, accessible at Members' convenience.**
  - 3.2.1 Members have indicated a willingness to attend training, but there have been some identified difficulties with daytime sessions, suggesting that evening sessions are the option most likely to encourage greater attendance. It has also been requested that Members be enabled to access sessions at their own convenience. With ever increasing commitments in both Member and Officer diaries, and in recognising that some training is more 'information giving' in nature, it is suggested the following information sessions / training be delivered by video briefings.



Note: All of these subjects formed part of the originally agreed Induction:

- Corporate Plan
- MTFP
- WLDC External Companies: What are they and why do we have them
- Central Lincolnshire Local Plan
- Neighbourhood Plans
- Environment & Sustainability Strategy – Overview
- Progress & Delivery: WLDC Performance Management
- Your Role in the Local Community
- Emergency Planning and Flooding
- Enforcement and Anti-social Behaviour (ASB) – the Council's Approach and how to report

3.2.2 These are subject areas where it is suggested that all Members having a wider base knowledge of the subject area would assist them in their understanding, but they are not considered critical to Members being able to undertake their duties from a legal perspective.

3.2.3 It is intended that these videos will be hosted via Learning Pool, Mod Gov Library or an MS Teams Councillor Group, for Members to access at their convenience.

3.2.4 There will be functionality for Members to comment, having watched the video and this feedback will be gathered and used to inform the future use of video briefings.

3.2.5 Members will also have the functionality to submit questions, and these will form a “your questions answered” information sheet which will be updated, featured alongside the video briefing and as such will be visible to all Members.

3.2.6 Videos will be limited to 25 minutes maximum or will be filmed in two parts.

3.2.7 If Members are supportive of this proposal, the video briefings listed above will start to be available to Members from mid-October. If a video briefing is issued but is considered to be time sensitive, for example due to an upcoming decision, Members will be notified of this fact with at least 2 weeks' notice.

3.2.8 The viewing of video briefings will not be a mandatory requirement on Members. It is intended for these briefings to be used as an assistive tool in sharing information and widening knowledge.

### 3.3 Hybrid Workshops

3.3.1 Members will note some areas referenced at section 1.5 above (originally planned for hybrid workshop delivery) do not appear on the list above, namely Levelling Up Fund (LUF), the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) and the Cultural Strategy.

3.3.2 Whilst these may have been suitable to convert and deliver by video briefing, specific requests have been made for these to remain hybrid Member Workshops. Members have expressed a real desire to engage in these projects at a fundamental level, with the need for two-way interaction.

3.3.3 Confirmed dates for these workshops are:

- 25 September, 6pm – LUF
- 27 September, 6pm – Cultural Strategy
- 25 October, 6pm – UKSPF

3.3.4 Areas where two-way interaction is required at the outset, and/or where the purpose of the session is to develop policy or to meet with partners, will not be considered suitable for video briefings.

3.3.5 It is proposed the default delivery mechanism for such events will be a hybrid workshop, to be held in the early evening wherever feasible.

#### 3.4 **Sessions to be Delivered / Repeated between October 2023 and April 2024 across Themes**

3.4.1 As mentioned in section 1.5 under *“training’ areas for new and returning Members”*, training was held on the following subjects, all of which were considered to be core governance matters, however attendance was sporadic.

- How the Council Makes Decisions
- Member / Officer Relations and Communications
- Code of Conduct
- Declarable Interests

3.4.2 In respect of the latter, the Code of Conduct requires all Members to undertake training in respect of its application. To date, this requirement has not been met.

3.4.3 Together, these areas provide Members with key skills and are the basic principles on which all decisions and interactions are based if the Council is to operate effectively. Moreover, these subjects provide the foundations from which more in-depth training is developed.

3.4.4 As such, it is proposed the matters previously covered across the sessions set out at paragraph 3.4.1 be revisited and be themed together to form a **Core Governance Training Module**.

#### 3.5 **Theme 1 – Core Governance Training for all Elected Members and Senior to Mid Managers**

3.5.1 Noting the importance of the key building blocks these sessions provide, it is proposed the Core Governance Training comprise three evening, fully online, sessions by an external provider:

- Session 1 – Good Governance and decision making and what makes an effective Council
- Session 2 – Standards of Conduct and behaviour as a Councillor
- Session 3 – Roles and Relationships: Officer Member relations

3.5.2 It is also proposed that **these be seen as a priority, and that all Members commit to attend all three sessions.** Given that there has now been a period of settling in, it is clear there have been times where a greater understanding of these matters may have proved of assistance.

3.5.3 In responding to Member feedback requesting that Officers try to both appropriately space training and to theme and prioritise training, it is proposed that Theme 1 for the Autumn period (end of October to the end of December) be Core Governance Training.

3.5.4 The full proposal from the external provider for Elected Members is attached at Appendix 3 and the proposed dates are as follows:

- Monday 30 October
- Monday 20 November
- Monday 11 December

3.5.5 All sessions would commence at 6pm and are to be delivered fully online to ensure maximum attendance. Members who complete all three sessions will receive a certificate of competency.

### **3.6 Senior and Mid Manager Governance Training Programme**

3.6.1 Recognising the importance of the Member / Officer interface and the respective roles of each, there will also be a Training Plan for mid and senior Managers.

3.6.2 The programme will be facilitated by the same external provider and will cover:

- The Role of Elected Members
- The Role of Officers
- Working in a Political Environment

3.6.3 The first of these sessions is being held in September 2023.

3.6.4 It is hoped that delivery of these two separate, but mutually reliant programmes, during the same period, demonstrates a real commitment from both Members and Officers in respect of ensuring good governance and mutually respectful working relationships.

3.6.5 There will also be internal training for managers on effective report writing and the internal sign off process applied to report writing and decision making.

### **3.7 Theme 2 – Finance, Audit and Scrutiny**

- 3.7.1 It is proposed that theme two focuses on finance, audit and scrutiny.
- 3.7.2 Theme two would be implemented over the Winter period (Jan 2024 to the end of March) and **would be considered mandatory to Members serving on the Governance and Audit Committee and/or Overview and Scrutiny Committee** but would be advantageous to all Members. This is considered a timely period during which to hold such training given the decisions Members will be asked to make during this time, in the run up to Budget setting. There is also considered to be a natural synergy which exists between Scrutiny and Audit Functions.
- 3.7.3 Whilst Members have received some elements of training on these subjects, the original induction did include provision for the following which are yet to be delivered but are still considered necessary:
- Work of the G&A Committee (including Risk, AGS)
  - The Role of Internal and External Auditors
  - The Role of Overview and Scrutiny Committee – External Trainer
- 3.7.4 As we enter the New Year, Treasury Management training will also become due and a number of related areas and disciplines have been identified which would complete this theme namely:
- The Role of Audit – External Training
  - Effective Scrutiny and Questioning – External Trainer
- 3.7.5 Training that has been made available and delivered to date in this theme includes:
- Statement of Accounts Training – September 2023
  - Budget preparation Workshops – September 2023
- 3.7.6 Recordings of these previous sessions have been made available to all Elected Members and are held for Members' future reference.
- 3.7.7 It is acknowledged that Scrutiny Training is delayed through these proposals until the New Year. It is also acknowledged that, given the Council's full Committee system governance model, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee does not have the legal standing it would have within a cabinet system. This means there are "quirks" of the Committee specific to West Lindsey District Council. For these reasons, Democratic Services Officers have developed a handbook for our Scrutiny Committee Members to assist them in their duties in the interim.
- 3.7.8 This has been shared with Members of the Committee and is available in the Modern Gov Library.
- 3.7.9 External sessions relevant to this theme (two of) will be held on a one per month basis in the evening on a fully virtual basis commencing at 6pm (dates to be confirmed). **These will be mandatory for Members of the relevant Committee but available to all Members.**

3.7.10 Internally hosted Sessions relevant to this theme will be run for one hour prior to the Governance and Audit Committee meetings. These will be hybrid in nature and open to all Members:

- Treasury Management – prior to January Committee
- Work of the G&A Committee (including Risk, AGS) – prior to April Committee

3.7.11 Recordings will be made available for all Members.

3.7.12 Members who complete all sessions relevant to each Committee will receive a certificate of competency for each area.

### **3.8 Theme 3 – Planning – Topical Matters**

3.8.1 It is proposed that theme three focuses on the wider aspects of planning.

3.8.2 Theme three will be implemented throughout the remainder of the 2023/24 Civic Year, with sessions interspersed with the agreed Theme 1 and Theme 2 sessions. Planning “Topical Matters” Training will be convened in a regular pattern, in order to establish it as a pre-existing standing commitment.

3.8.3 These sessions will **be considered essential to Members serving on the Planning Committee** but would be advantageous to all Members.

3.8.4 The Planning Committee and its operation has been the focus of attention in the early months of the newly elected Council. All Members of the Committee and a large number of other Members attended a full day’s planning training session, hosted by an external provider, this being the best attended session of the original induction.

3.8.5 However, following a challenging meeting in July, all Members of the Committee were mandated to undertake ‘Decision Making in Planning’ and further ‘Introduction to Planning’ training sessions. These were held in person. Attendance was high (all serving Members of the Committee received both sessions) and feedback was positive.

3.8.6 Since this time there have been noticeable improvements in the way Members have discharged their functions. The Chairman of Planning Committee is supportive in recognising the need for continuous and ongoing training for Members in this area, given the high-profile nature of this Committee, and the legal and reputational risks which can arise from its decisions.

3.8.7 In order to build on the successful sessions held in July and August of 2023, and to continue the momentum of continuous learning and improvement, it is proposed that the Wednesday evening sitting between each Planning Committee (which meets on a four-weekly cycle) be a dedicated Planning Topical Matter Briefing, hosted online and lasting a maximum of one hour.

3.8.8 These dates are:

- 18 October
- 15 November
- 13 December
- 17 January 2024
- 14 February
- 13 March
- 10 April

3.8.9 Whilst the exact topics are still to be determined, the following are suggestions which have been made and submitted by both Members and Officers:

- Flooding and Drainage (in the Context of Planning) – Partners to be invited.
- Highways (in the Context of Planning) - Partners to be invited.
- Section 106
- Heritage Planning
- Affordable Housing & Community Infrastructure
- Material Considerations and Planning Conditions
- Enabling Councillors to make effective ward call ins.

3.8.10 Members are asked to approve the principles of theme three, the proposed intervals and delivery mechanism which would be a virtual briefing, unless there was a specific request or need for these to be held in person.

3.8.11 The exact theme for each session will be determined by the Chairman of the Planning Committee, Planning and Democratic Services Officers, and Planning Committee Members in a collaborative manner.

3.8.12 This theme is also supported by a number of the planned video sessions detailed in Section 3.1 above (eg Local Plan, Neighbourhood Plans), which would become available from mid-October onwards if the proposals in this report are supported.

3.8.13 The theme would conclude in April (date to be set) with an in person externally led 'Probity in Planning' session which would re-embed the messages given in July and August, and build on the learning all Members will have had by attending the sessions suggested in Theme one.

3.8.14 Recordings of topical matters will be made available in the library for all Members.

3.7.15 Members who "attend" all sessions relevant to this Committee will receive a certificate of competency for Planning.

#### **4 Training Areas to be facilitated through Learning Pool (e-learning platform)**

- 4.1 There are a selection of self-learning courses available to Members on the Learning Pool platform, predominantly regarding what would be classed as personal development areas.
- 4.2 Increasing the usage of the e-learning platform remains an aspiration of both Members and Officers and is a delivery mechanism Members have again indicated they are open to expanding.
- 4.3 This platform is already used by Officers, and training modules designed for staff could be easily adapted to be suitable and available to Members in the following subjects:
- Data Protection
  - Freedom of Information
  - Information Governance
  - Safeguarding
- 4.4 A e-learning package for Equality and Diversity, following the adoption of the new policy, is also in development.
- 4.5 Members will be expected to complete the subjects within three months of each module being launched and will receive an e-certificate on completion. Non-completion will be reported to Group Leaders.
- 4.6 It is recognised that Elected Members hold a number of other roles for which they will likely have undertaken Safeguarding Training, and as such the question has been raised as to whether such Members need to undertake this training.
- 4.7 After much consideration, it is the view of Officers and the Member Development Group that Members should be expected to undertake West Lindsey specific safeguarding training to ensure they are aware of the reporting mechanisms used within the Council.
- 4.8 If Members are agreeable to the proposal to move the subjects listed at 4.3 onto the e-learning platform, modules will start being released in November, with one subject released each month. Members will receive full support on accessing and using the platform.
- 4.9 The modules will need to be competed every two years. Officers are currently expected to complete these annually.

## **5. Self-Learning – LGA Resources for (Newly) Elected Councillors**

- 5.1 Members asked to be notified of opportunities where self-learning could be undertaken at their convenience.
- 5.2 The LGA is a sector lead in producing resources which are designed to complement any induction support delivered by the Authority.

## **5.3 LGA Councillor Hub**

5.3.1 The LGA has developed a Councillor hub to provide newly elected Members with all the essential information they need to complement the induction support provided by their own councils. On the hub, Members can find information about the role of a Councillor; how local government is organised; the Councillor Code of Conduct and standards; and decision making. It includes information on the key policy areas of the LGA, the resources, events and services offered by the LGA with links to the political groups at the LGA, where Members can access peer support from Members of their political affiliation.

5.3.2 It also provides information on the LGAs regional teams, information on their support and development offers, and a host of other information essential for Elected Members.

5.3.3 The Hub is a live and evolving resource which is updated regularly and provides information and links relevant to new and existing members and can be accessed via <https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/councillor-development/new-councillor-hub>.

#### **5.4 LGA Councillor e-learning platform**

5.4.1 In response to the continued need to deliver councillor development offers through virtual means, the LGA provides a dedicated Councillor e-learning platform.

5.4.2 Councillors wishing to access the e-learning platform need to self-register via the website. The platform allows Councillors to access bespoke learning, choosing the modules most relevant to their needs from deepening knowledge of local government to the essential leadership skills needed to work effectively with communities.

5.4.3 These resources have been promoted to Members previously and Officers will periodically promote sessions which are relevant to the Themed training programme outlined in Section 3. All Members are encouraged to access these resources.

5.4.4 Officers will have no oversight of what a Member has accessed via the LGA and as such, this would be seen as complementary self-development and would not be a substitute for any training which Members are requested to attend by the Authority.

### **6. Areas Outstanding**

6.1 Should the proposals detailed throughout this report be supported, the following sessions from the original Induction Programme, and additional requests to date, would remain undelivered:

- Focussed session of Standing Orders / Rules of Debate (P and P – Chairs Role) - obligatory for Committee Chairs and Vice Chairs (to be arranged either as individual sessions or for multiple attendees, to be confirmed post Annual Council)
- Commercial Strategy – timeline TBC



- Leisure Contract – Scope of contract
- Overview of Committee Report Template

6.2 Noting Members feedback to appropriately space training and recognising the amount of training which will need to be delivered through themes 1- 3, as detailed in this report, direction is sought from Members as to the priority which should be applied to these outstanding requests and the preferred delivery model for each. Suggestions are made in the following paragraphs to assist deliberations.

6.3 It is suggested that hosting individual sessions for Chairman of Committees pertaining to rules of debate, standing orders and powers and duties of Chairmen, may be most effective and would ensure the information is relevant to the individual, and their needs. It would allow the training to be held at a time and via a means most beneficial to the individual concerned and recognises the varying degrees of experience of current post holders.

6.4 It is suggested the following be organised at a time and date to be agreed with the relevant Chair and Lead Officer, but these should not compromise or be prioritised over the themed training. Timescales will likely be dictated by the decisions needing to be made.

- Health Strategy Action Plan Information Session (Committee request)
- Commercial Strategy
- Leisure Contract – Scope of Contract

6.5 It is finally suggested that the overview of committee reports could be converted to an online video and that webcasting etiquette could be suspended until Year 2, when some “softer skills” and personal development training, which this session is deemed to be, will be considered as a theme within the Plan.

6.6 In setting next year’s committee timetable, consideration will be given to introducing periodic workshop dates within that timetable, as an early indicator to Members. This can be used or cancelled as necessary, but this approach would help in ensuring time is set aside in advance for emerging issues or requests made.

## **7. Next steps**

7.1 Member Development continues to be the topic of much discussion, with further suggestions and topics continuing to be added for consideration.

7.2 As recently as last week, Leading Members have been discussing how Members can learn more about services, strategic growth, and priorities.

7.3 It is important to recognise, as this report demonstrates, the amount of training and information which needs to be disseminated between now and April 2024.

- 7.4 It is therefore suggested that the Member Development Group meet as a minimum at the conclusion of each Theme, and that at each Theme Review meeting they consider any new requests or emerging issues, with a view to being in a position to present an outline Year 2 training plan to the Governance and Audit Committee in April / June 2024.
- 7.5 The appropriateness of the new delivery mechanisms (video briefings and e-learning) will be reviewed during the period by the Member Development Group to determine if they are a realistic and effective way in which to pass information to Members.
- 7.6 Members will be periodically surveyed on these new arrangements, feedback is encouraged and is essential if training is to be developed and delivered in a manner which meets both Members needs and any legal requirements. Feedback received will be considered by the Member Development Group and used to inform future proposals.
- 7.7 Further training methods such as role play, Question and Answer mini sheets, interactive sessions and shared learning opportunities with neighbouring Councils will be further explored but given the work to be delivered in the current civic year, these wider considerations will form part of the offer during Year 2.